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Message Text

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13
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 USIA-06 RSC-01 CU-02 /020 R

DRAFTED BY USIA:EPENNEY/WARUGH /NEA/ARP:FMDICKMAN:GLG
APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER
---------- 036441
R 292347Z NOV 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SANAA
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 263624

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PROP, ALIB, SCUL, YE, US

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE CLOSING OF FOREIGN CULTURAL CENTERS

REF: SANAA'S 2406

1. WE ARE CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF CULTURAL CENTER RESTRICTION REPORTED REFTEL. EMBASSY'S PROPOSED RESPONSE TO YARG WOULD ONLY PROTECT ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING OPERATION. USIA HAS, AS YOU KNOW, INTENDED THAT CENTER BE USED FOR VARIETY OF CULTURAL PROGRAMMING INCLUDING FILM SHOWS, LECTURES, AND POSSIBLY SMALL REFERENCE LIBRARY. ENGLISH TEACHING ALONE WOULD NOT APPEAR TO BE SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION FOR USIS PRESENCE IN YAR AND AGENCY INTENDS USE BUILDING RENTED FOR CENTER FOR MORE THAN TEFL. IF YARG DOES NOT ALLOW USIS TO CONDUCT NON-TEFL CULTURAL PROGRAMS IN CENTER, USIA WOULD HAVE TO RECONSIDER ITS ENTIRE OPERATION IN YAR.

2. WE REALIZE YAR MAY BE UNWILLING MAKE DISTINCTION BETWEEN TROUBLESOME AND HELPFUL CULTURAL CENTERS. WE HOPE YARG WILL NOT OFFICIALLY RAISE MATTER WITH EMBASSY OR CARRY OUT CENTER RESTRICTIONS SINCE OUR RESPONSE WOULD HAVE TO BE STRAIGHTFORWARD EXPLANATION THAT USIS HAS BEEN PLANNING
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ON INTRODUCING LOW KEY CULTURAL PROGRAMMING IN CENTER.

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TO HIDE THIS FROM YEMENIS WOULD TIE OUR HANDS IN FUTURE,
OR WOULD, IF WE WENT AHEAD WITH CULTURAL PROGRAMMING
ANYWAY, INVITE IRAQIS AND OTHERS TO POINT FINGER AT
OUR CENTER AS CONTRAVENING YAR REGULATIONS.

3. SUBJECT TO EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON HOW FAR YAR WANTS
TO GO IN DEALING WITH CENTERS, WE ARE INCLINED TO
BIDE OUR TIME AND NOT RAISE SUBJECT AT ALL WITH
YAR AND SEE JUST HOW YAR DEALS WITH SITUATION. WE
WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION ON
HOW WE COULD BEST PRESERVE OPERATIONS THAT WE NOW
HAVE WHICH WOULD, IN EVENT YAR RAISES MATTER, PERMIT
US TO EMPHASIZE TO YAR BENEFITS IT DERIVES FROM
TEFL PROGRAM AND NON-THREATENING NATURE OF USIS
CULTURAL PROGRAM.

4. IN PREPARING REPLY, WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE LEARNING
HOW BRITISH PLAN TO RESPOND IF RESTRICTIONS COME. INGERSOLL

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